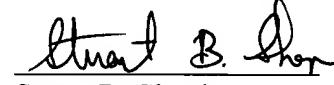




Patentability of the subject application. However, copies of the patents are provided for the Examiner's convenience and review.

The amendment, requiring no substantial additional work on the part of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, is considered to be in condition for acceptance and entry of this amendment into the subject application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Stuart B. Shapiro
Registration No. 40,169

EPSTEIN, EDELL, SHAPIRO, FINNAN & LYTLE, LLC
1901 Research Boulevard, Suite 400
Rockville, Maryland 20850
(301) 424-3640

Hand-delivered: May 9, 2001